

***Salmonella* Enteritidis/Shell Eggs/May 2026 - CARA ID 1378**

On 5/18/2026, OII ERC partners notified CORE Signals of a new *Salmonella* Enteritidis cluster ((b)(5)), with an epidemiological signal for eggs and genetic association to previous outbreaks linked to shell eggs. On 5/27/2026, CDC and TX partners identified shell eggs as the leading hypothesis and suspect vehicle for this investigation. Shell egg exposure became a leading outbreak vehicle hypothesis due to the whole genome sequencing (WGS) link to another shell egg-associated cluster and reports of shell egg consumption from early epidemiologic data from a routine interview. FDA initiated a traceback investigation consisting of five cases from three states (Texas, Colorado, & Louisiana), representing five different Points-of Sale (POS)/traceback legs. The traceback of whole shelled eggs identified a total of ten distributors located in Texas, Colorado, and New York that supplied whole shelled eggs of various sizes (med, large, x-large), grades (A, AA), and counts (12 ct, 18 ct) that was ultimately supplied to the five POS included in the traceback during the time frame of interest. Whole shelled eggs supplied to the identified distributors were sourced from multiple egg farms located in Texas, Utah, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Iowa, with three of the five traceback legs converging at Midwest Poultry Services (MPS) (b)(4). There were eight CORE issued record collection assignments related to this outbreak investigation; 7 records collection and 1 associated with field investigations. On 8/21/2026, investigators closed the comprehensive Egg Rule inspection with traceback records, information collection, and environmental swabbing at Midwest Poultry Service (MPS) (b)(4) with issuance of an FDA Form 483 noting three observations - 1) Your Pullet environment is not tested for SE when pullets are 14 to 16 weeks of age; 2) The poultry house environmental sampling plan was not appropriate to the poultry house layout; 3) Your poultry house was not cleaned and disinfected by appropriate procedures before new laying hens were added to the house, when there was an environmental test that was positive for SE at any point during the life of a flock that was housed there prior to depopulation. There were a total of eight FDA samples collected from Midwest Poultry Service (MPS) (b)(4). WGS analysis of 27 *Salmonella* Enteritidis isolates revealed a single strain. The 27 focal isolates from FDA samples FDA1319812, FDA1323893, and FDA1323894 were 0 - 6 SNPs apart from each other (Mean: 1.88 SNPs) and fell into a large *S. Enteritidis* tree. Based on SNP distance (0 - 10 SNPs away Mean: 2.2 SNPs), they are determined to match the clinical isolates associated with the focal outbreak ((b)(5)). There was one voluntary recall initiated by Midwest Poultry Service (MPS) (b)(4) which included a recall of 1,589,577 dozen white shell eggs and brown cage free shell eggs produced in Texas because they had the potential to be contaminated with *Salmonella* Enteritidis. Due to epidemiologic, traceback evidence (convergence), and positive samples matching the outbreak strain, shell eggs that were distributed by Midwest Poultry Service (MPS) (b)(4) were confirmed as the outbreak vehicle. On 9/3/2026, CDC closed the epidemiologic investigation with 134 cases from 18 states: AR (5), AZ

(4), CA (1), CO (1), GA (2), IL (1), LA (8), MI (1), MO (1), MS (1), NC (1), NM (3), NV (1), NY (1), OK (2), SC (1), TX (99), WV (1). There were 34 hospitalizations, and 0 deaths reported.